

IN THE TITLE

Please replace “MECHANICALLY ROBUST PAD INTERFACE AND METHOD THEREFORE” with -- METHOD FOR FORMING A SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICE HAVING A MECHANICALLY ROBUST PAD INTERFACE--.

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) A method of forming a semiconductor device, comprising:
 - forming an uppermost interconnect level [conductive bond pad] over a semiconductor substrate, wherein the uppermost interconnect level includes an interconnect portion and a bond pad;
 - forming a passivation layer over the [conductive bond pad] uppermost interconnect level;
 - removing portions of the passivation layer, wherein removing portions of the passivation layer exposes portions of the bond pad and forms a plurality of support structures [that overlie] overlying the [conductive] uppermost surface of the bond pad [, and wherein removing portions of the passivation layer exposes a portion of the conductive bond pad]; and
 - forming a conductive capping layer overlying the plurality of support structures, wherein the conductive capping layer electrically contacts [a portion of] the [conductive] bond pad.
2. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a copper content of uppermost interconnect level [the conductive bond pad] is at least 90 atomic percent [comprises mostly copper].

3. (Amended) The method of claim [2] 1, further comprising forming dielectric studs within the [conductive] bond pad, wherein at least a portion of a support structure overlies a portion of a dielectric stud.

4. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the dielectric layer includes a material selected from a group consisting of a [nitride] nitrogen, [and] a hydrogen, and a carbon containing silicon oxide.

5. (Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of support structures are interconnected with unremoved portions of the [dielectric] passivation layer.

6. (Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein forming the [conductive bond pad] uppermost interconnect level further comprises forming the [conductive] bond pad over at least one dielectric layer having a Young's modulus less than approximately 50 Giga Pascals.

8. (Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising forming a barrier layer between the capping layer and the [conductive] bond pad, wherein the barrier layer overlies the support structures and abuts exposed portions of the bond pad excluded by the support structures.